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DIVINE FAVOUR *the Highest Honour of a KING, and the
Greatest ENCOURAGEMENT of a NATION, proved in GOD's
answering the Prayer of KING SOLOMON:*

George THE SUBSTANCE OF
A SERMON
PREACHED AT THE
ORDINATION
OF THE

Rev. Mr. JOHN SIBREE,
At FROME in SOMERSETSHIRE,
On WHIT-TUESDAY, JUNE 14, 1791.

*Wherein the Encouragement and Comfort of WORSHIPPERS are Insisted
on, from KING SOLOMON being a TYPE of HIM who is now both
KING and PRIEST in the WORLD ABOVE.*

By the Rev. T. PRIESTLEY, 12
MINISTER of the GOSPEL in LONDON, &c. and
Author of the NEW EXPOSITION of the HOLY BIBLE; and of
A FUNERAL DISCOURSE Preached before the CHURCH in
JEWIN-STREET, on the DEATH of the Late COUNTESS
DOWAGER of HUNTINGDON, &c.



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To My FRIENDS and the PUBLIC.

I Make no apology for printing this Sermon. The only apology necessary, is due to those who particularly recommended the Publication, for it's not being published *before*. Indeed, independent of those intervals dedicated to my Ministerial duties, my time is almost *wholly engrossed* by my *engaging* in the EVANGELICAL FAMILY BIBLE*—as I am determined to exert every endeavour to make that favourite *Work* in all it's parts as COMPLETE as Possible. The collecting, writing, and arranging materials for the ANNOTATIONS, MARGINAL NOTES, REFLECTIONS, &c. take up more time than I at first imagined; but I am resolved, rather than *relax* in the Work, to pay *more attention*, if possible, to the future part of this Business, in order to secure the *approbation* of a very Numerous List of Subscribers, in TOWN and COUNTRY. My being thus engaged, is therefore the chief cause why this Discourse was not published soon after Whitsuntide.

The SUBJECT MATTER of it is what I so much wish to be more universally known in the CHRISTIAN WORLD, that I hope many MINISTERS will be stirred up to enlarge on it more than ever. Little has been written on this Subject; and it is a rare thing to hear it much spoken of in public: besides, the mind of the CHRISTIAN being seldom led to it, proves the great necessity there is that *such parts* of the SYSTEM of DIVINITY should be more frequently *explained*.

All will readily grant, that we are to aim at doing the WILL of GOD on EARTH, as it is now done by the inhabitants of the HEAVENLY WORLD; but unless those *very things*, which are seen there without a glass between, are presented to the FAITH of the BELIEVER, he has not the proper means which GOD has appointed for that purpose. As there are some *principal parts* in the *human body*, and other parts which are less so,

* NOTE, Many Friends having observed that the more THE BIBLE is seen and known, the more extensive will be the sale, and the more good of course it will be the means of doing,—I therefore beg my brother Ministers, Friends and Subscribers, will shew the Numbers, and Recommend the Work, as much as possible, among their acquaintance, being persuaded myself that great good may be done to the cause of CHRIST, by spreading such a Publication in the World.

so, the cutting off which, would not prevent the body's subsisting comfortably; but if the principal parts of the human frame are out of order, of consequence all the others are: so there are *principal parts* in *Divinity*, which if the CHRISTIAN be not well informed in, he will be much injured in his comfort, and greatly incapacitated for serving GOD in this world as they do in heaven.

I have attempted, in the following pages, to lead the minds of my readers to those very things, which are most evidently the DELIGHT and GLORY of JEHOVAH himself. It is an infinite mercy, that the greatest things of Redemption are revealed in such a manner, as to leave not so much as a doubt in the mind of the Christian.

A BELIEVER who heard that voice from Heaven, "THIS IS MY BELOVED SON," could not but discern *that*, in which JEHOVAH *delighted*;—so likewise the man that beholds the exaltation of CHRIST, and the office he perpetually fulfils, will be as much satisfied what that is, which JEHOVAH particularly and immutably *glories* in.

To behold with a steady faith, JEHOVAH DELIGHTING in SALVATION, as well in the *thing itself*, as in the *form* and *manner* of it, and this before all his saved ones above, is a subject, that will greatly assist a believer at the THRONE of GRACE; will tend to fill his heart with such ideas of heaven, as will banish his slavish fears, and enable him to live above the frowns of this world. Whatever engages our thoughts on those very things, which are the chief and principal subjects of the celestial assembly, will, under the influence of Divine Grace, excite us to prepare for heaven, and give us reason to hope for heavenly pleasures in our travels thither.

It would be ascribing great FOLLY to an INFINITELY WISE JEHOVAH, to insinuate that he did *not* intend something very important by SOLOMON's PRAYING, and such an answer to his prayer as he vouchsafed to give; and it has been my design, in this discourse, to enlarge on those very things which GOD intended to teach that and every future generation, by such a remarkable TYPE of HIM, who is now both KING and HIGH-PRIEST in HEAVEN. That my readers may be BLESSED with Eyes to see CHRIST in all his CHARACTERS and OFFICES to their PRESENT and ETERNAL COMFORT, is the PRAYER of

THEIRS in the BEST of CAUSES,

T. PRIESTLEY.

Jewin-Street,
LONDON.

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Greatest ENCOURAGEMENT of a NATION, *proved in* GOD's
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The Rev. T. PRIESTLEY's
S E R M O N,
PREACHED AT THE
O R D I N A T I O N
Of the Rev. Mr. JOHN SIBREE,
At FROME in *Somersetshire*, on WHIT-TUESDAY, *June 14, 1791.*

2 CHRONICLES, Chap. vii. and last Clause of Verse 16.
" Mine EYES and mine HEART shall be THERE perpetually."



HAT could Solomon desire more than
such a promise as this! Godly persons,
and they only, could rejoice on hearing
this gracious answer: the ungodly cannot
so much as wish that either the eye of
God, or his heart, should be set on them.
If you are helped to see this text in a pro-
per light, it may fill you with as much joy and comfort as, no
doubt, this answer did the hearts of many who heard it.
David had long lamented that the ark of God dwelt between cur-
tains; but now the typical worship was arriving at its highest
pitch of splendor and glory, and these words in my text crowned
the whole; for what would all the glory of that temple, and its
B furniture

furniture have been, if God had refused to countenance the worship? And have we nothing as great as this, to animate and encourage us in our worship? Is not our King now in heaven, far superior to king Solomon on earth? Is not his continual intercession far preferable to this prayer of Solomon?

To be blessed with eyes to see, must always be considered as one of the greatest mercies a God of grace bestows on any of his creatures. What were all the great things which Ahab had, to this great privilege? The eyes Elijah was favoured with, and his view of divine subjects, were of infinitely greater value than the honours of the most rich and powerful monarchs; and the knowledge given to Paul was abundantly preferable to the crown of an emperor.

It strikes us with a solemn awe, when we observe some persons, who, though blessed with peculiar privileges, have neither eyes to discern, nor hearts to embrace them. This was most evidently the case with great numbers of the children of Israel, even while they were living upon miracles, and had no incumbrances from worldly cares and necessities; for they were entirely exempted from those numerous outward trials and perplexities which appear burdensome to many a sincere soul. The chief thing the Israelites had to engage their attention, was, the worship of God; but, like the silly dove, they had neither hearts to love, nor eyes to see the glories of that salvation which was perpetually held out to them in types and shadows. Never had any people upon the face of the earth, such an opportunity of worshipping God aright, like those in the wilderness: their provisions came directly from God, and every thing around them afforded matter of instruction. This day, in which Solomon dedicated the temple, was one of the most glorious days under the Old Testament worship,—yet they who were in blindness and unbelief, shared not in the sacred pleasures which it yielded to others.

God, as a sovereign, has a right to reveal that salvation, in which his eternal glory is immediately interested, in what way

and manner he pleases. What mortal world dare to find fault with Christ, for speaking in parables to the people at large? Nothing can be more evident, than that many, who lived in times of the Old Testament worship, had not such light as we have. It is also clear, from that history which God himself has handed down to us, that the light and knowledge of this salvation has been gradually revealed to the church, and that at different periods, even according to his sovereign pleasure. He suffered the mystery to lie hid from ages and generations; the greatest part of the world, as it is at this day, was wrapt in darkness; happy indeed was it, everlastingly happy, for such in the land of Judah, as had eyes at that period given them to see what was to be viewed at this dedication of the temple.

For the space of two thousand years, the church was chiefly supported by that promise, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel," Gen. iii. 15. The lives of the Antediluvians being so very long, the knowledge of man's perfect state, his fall, the promise of a Saviour, and of a covenant of grace, was handed down by one to another: Adam himself, who lived 930 years, could declare the whole to Methuselah, who was cotemporary with him about 247 years; Methuselah could converse with Noah about 500 years, and with Shem near one hundred. According to Mr. TRAPP's calculation, Shem saw ten generations, and died when Isaac was about 50 years of age; so that Isaac might have the light of the truth, as the fifth person from Adam.

As it is evident that we have advantages which those persons were not favoured with, who had only types and shadows of Christ to look to; so it appears, that sincere worshippers, who lived after the time of Moses, had greater light than the Antediluvians, the more immediate descendants from Adam. The light thus gradually increasing for the space of four thousand years, reflects the highest honour on the dispensation which we now enjoy; since

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we have not only the peculiar advantage of seeing how this light came in, but likewise behold the sun in his meridian splendor.

If they who were cotemporaries with Solomon were not sensible of the advantages which they then enjoyed, and that they were preferable to those enjoyed by persons who lived before the flood; they must be ignorant of the true nature of their religion; and if we do not perceive the great light which now shines, it is because the eyes of our understanding are not yet enlightened to discern it.

The true worshippers of this day, who understand the dispensation under which our lot is cast, are persuaded that there is now no necessity for types and shadows.—Just as, when the sun rises, the lesser light of the moon and stars is eclipsed, and rendered unnecessary.

The glory of Divine Providence, and the peculiar care of God over his people, shone forth in a new and singular manner in the days of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and particularly in Jacob's family; in over-ruling the cruelty of Joseph's brethren for bringing the seed of Abraham under the Egyptian bondage; in their remarkable deliverance from thence, in their march through the sea; and, in the whole of their travels through the wilderness: by this the name of Jehovah was revered to the ends of the earth.

Divine Providence being only subservient to the glorious plan of grace, those seasons, in which any particular beams of that light broke forth, were as nothing to this period of God's giving more enlarged discoveries of his infinite designs of love and grace, by such a type of Christ as was now exhibited in Solomon: there had been many types of Christ before, but not one to represent him as both king and intercessor for his church in one person.

The true worshippers, who saw at this time what God designed to teach his people by so great a king as Solomon thus praying for all the congregation of Israel, would think that all those worshippers must be blessed indeed, whose happy lot it should be to live in this world after the ascension of Christ: they would be impressed with
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the greatness of the privilege of those who should have the Lord of heaven, and King of kings, being both God and man, was fulfilling the office of king and priest for his church: they would see an infinite difference between looking to a mere man thus praying for them, and seeing the Lord of all worlds not only interceding for them, but having fully paid the price for their salvation, and completely finished the great work.

It was certainly a glorious period wherein God was seen to move the heart of a great king, thus to pray from his very heart for temporal and spiritual blessings for Israel; this not only proved that God had not forsaken his people, but that he would dwell with man on earth in very deed. As sure as the Holy Ghost enabled Abel to offer his sacrifice by faith, so he helped many of those, who beheld Solomon engaged in prayer, to see that great king and priest who by faith now attracts the attention of the heavenly world, more than that earthly monarch then filled that congregation with wonder and delight. The joy and happiness of that day was but a faint shadow of its antitype above. This makes it appear, that the period to which the words of my text refer was peculiarly glorious.

The believing worshipper must have had his understanding enlarged, in reflecting on the efficacy of that office which should be filled by no less a person than he who should be both God and man, and who should have his people's interests as much more on his heart, as his person is more glorious than that of Solomon's was.

It must convey a very pleasing idea to any worshipper at that time, to believe that God was, by this very circumstance, holding forth Christ to view; and indeed a salvation so infinitely glorious, could have nothing too great to typify it. What was the greatest king upon the face of the earth, to the Lord of heaven and earth! Solomon not only thus prayed, but thought it his honour to be thus publicly engaged; and was no doubt particularly called to this public service by God: it was one of the highest honours ever conferred

ferred on any king. This was wonderful in the eyes of that congregation; but it is the highest wonder of angels, that HE, who is infinitely greater than Solomon, should esteem it an honour to be in office even in the world of glory. "So also Christ glorified not himself, to be made an high-priest; but Him that said unto him, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," Heb. v. 5.

This is a striking proof of the greatness of men's salvation, that Christ's highest glory as Mediator should arise out of it; that must be truly glorious, which is the glory of the Lord of heaven and earth. This demonstrates the darkness of those men, who see nothing in this wonderful system of redemption worthy of their notice; for it is "to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness," 1 Cor. i. 23.

We have not the least doubt but there was a point in time, wherein Solomon was praying this very prayer, to which these words of God are an answer: to realize such periods, has a tendency to impress the heart with the solemnity of that season. We are also fully persuaded that there was a precise period in which our glorious Jesus entered on his work in this lower world; and also when he finished that work; these were both glorious periods: but to have seen him enter into that eminently glorious and exalted station which he now fills, must have been the grandest sight rational creatures had ever been witness to, from the creation of God. It was a new sight to the inhabitants of the heavenly world themselves: they now saw, in the person of the Lord Jesus, that very salvation which they had lived and died in the faith of. It is very evident that some of the most glorious periods, in which the great things of our salvation were accomplished, are already past; we see Christ enter on a new office in the heavenly sanctuary above; "for Christ is not entered into the holy place made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us," Heb. ix. 24. so that we may with the greatest certainty say, there is something in heaven now, which was not there eighteen hundred years ago;

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and until that period, heaven seemed to have wanted some of its proper furniture: Christ, in that world, is more to the saved than all the redeemed together; to Him in this station, the eyes of believers in every part of the globe are directed, and meet as the beams of light in one common focus.

Though we have not the great satisfaction to see a Solomon praying before so many thousands; yet, if we look by faith, we can realize our spiritual Solomon in the midst of an innumerable company above. It was no doubt the intention of Jehovah, not only at this remarkable period, and by this circumstance, to instruct the Jews then living, but also Christians, to the end of the world:—for many of the greatest things are to this day perceived and known by the help of types and figures; the high priesthood is in a particular manner thus seen to this present day. For as the chief things which we are required to believe, are things which we never saw with our bodily eyes; therefore it is an advantage to have those things held forth to our senses by some striking types and figures; and especially when these are such as God himself chuses. He who made our natures, understands best how to instruct us.

As I wish at this time to lead the minds of my hearers to see what glorious things God at this period was teaching his people; I would,

I. Offer a few remarks on what might be most suitable at this memorable time.

II. Shew what his worshippers may expect from God, when he thus encourages them.

III. How such ordinances ought to be attended, where God has promised to have his eye and heart perpetually.

1. Inasmuch as God is the immediate author of the Old Testament worship, on this account all respect paid to that institution was looked on by Jehovah, as obedience to his will.—The worshipper being fully persuaded of this, the form and method of the worship would necessarily be as a light to his feet, and
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be in its purity held out to him by God. The sincere worshipper would be the more confirmed in this by the peculiar and strict commands given to preserve his worship pure; by the awful and dreadful punishments threatened to idolaters; and by the great blessings promised to the obedient. Thus Aaron's sons, for taking upon themselves in a presumptuous manner to offer strange fire, were destroyed by God's immediate hand, in a most awful manner: this gave the people to understand how particularly Jehovah observed the conduct of all those worshippers who acknowledged his authority; that none should come before him with any innovations of their own; and these things would tend greatly to confirm them in the belief of the regard that God had for that mode of worship which himself had established.

There is nothing to which fallen nature is more prone, than to reject the authority of God, and to invent some other way of worship, how foolish and absurd soever it be. This is the reason why there have been such extravagant follies adopted, not only in the pagan part of the world, but even among the Jews, which brought on the latter such awful judgments—and at length their folly caused their ruin: they could have no doubt of God's being the sole author of their worship, since he so awfully slew many who attempted to encroach on his authority in it; and gave such laws for keeping his worship pure, as only a God of infinite wisdom could have given.

The highest glory of the typical worship, consisted not only in having God for its immediate author, but in teaching the worshipper to look for more than pardon at his hands; and in the satisfaction the worshipper had in paying a proper respect to it, as typical of something infinitely greater: this in particular was highly agreeable to Jehovah—for without this faith, it was impossible to please God. This doctrine Abel preaches, and will continue to preach, to the end of the world—therefore those worshippers, who had their minds confined merely to the form of the worship, could not be said to worship agreeably to the mind of God.

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The very nature of the Jewish worship taught them to consider it as only typical: for all the services together, could have no virtue in them to atone for the least sin; and the less they had of that appearance, the more the worshippers were taught to look behind them to the great Antitype.

2. The high priest, in his office, was the center of all the typical worship. As a man may err in some doctrines, and yet build upon the foundation; so a worshipper might mistake in some parts of that emblematical worship; but they who understood not the nature of the high priest's office, were ignorant of every part of the worship: in like manner we say, they who see not the end and design which God had in the death of Christ, must be ignorant of the whole Gospel, as were those persons who understood not the nature and intent of that high office.

An Israelite who saw the sin offering killed, the skin, the flesh, and dung burned without the camp; if at the same time he saw not what this was a type of, he could not attend on that service with affection; but the worshipper that had true faith, had his mind led to the very things which were the life of that worship, and to things which God himself had chiefly in his own thoughts when he instituted it;—nay, the chief things which had been from everlasting in his mind, and continue to be so to this very moment. The evidence of this affords no small pleasure to a contemplative believer, and proves the infinite and everlasting importance of the Gospel; for that which is the chief in God's esteem, must be great indeed. What were the rise and fall of the greatest monarchies of the world, which God revealed to Daniel, to the subject of "the Messiah's being cut off, but not for himself?" Those dominions were as nothing, to the "stone cut out of the mountain without hands," Dan. ii. 9.

It is a great proof of the darkness of that period when our Lord was upon earth, that the high priest himself was a Sadducee; and it strongly proves the proneness of men to err in the most important points, when those persons, whose very office and interest it should

be to teach others the truth, are themselves in a state of enmity against it. To this the Holy Ghost alludes by the prophet, "Who is blind, but my servant; or deaf, as my messenger that I sent?" Isa. xlii. 19. and there cannot be a greater proof of the enmity of men against God, than the aversion which they in a particular manner evidence against that in which the chief glory of God, as a God of grace, is manifested.

As a good marksman points his gun at the principal parts of the bird, or beast, which he designs to shoot, so Satan particularly aims at blinding the minds of worshippers in the most important points. It has certainly been one of the most subtle arts of the grand adversary, to entangle the minds of many, and to engage their whole attention about the circumstantials of religion, to the neglect of its fundamental parts. It is therefore an infinite mercy when the Holy Ghost leads the mind of the believer principally, and invariably, to the center of religion; and it is a great advantage to a Christian, to have the essential things in religion, insisted on most frequently. Ministers, from an unwillingness to discover their aversion to the truth, often neither dare oppose it, nor avow what themselves believe. We read of one of our English travellers who, being indulged by some pagans with a view of the temple, and idols in it, was astonished at the furniture and riches of the temple; but when he perceived, in the center of the place, a living ape to be their chief idol, he was still more surprised that such an immense treasure should be wasted upon so mean an animal. I am fully persuaded, however, that they who hold Christ to be a mere man, are much more irrational, as they would prove Jehovah himself as bad as these deluded pagans, in approving of so much treasure being expended in the temple and its services, if after all they should mean scarce any thing more than to mislead the worshipper; which would cast the highest reflection on God himself, for appointing such a costly and pompous mode of worship. Few of these superficial ministers will mention what
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their thoughts are concerning the end which God had in appointing those rites which he commanded to be so punctually observed, or concerning those dreadful judgments to be inflicted on offenders; an enquiry into these things, does not suit those ideas of God which such persons wish to implant in the minds of their hearers; but as many of the ancient worshippers, who poured contempt on that mode of worship, brought on themselves the tremendous frowns of its author, so will these, and for the same reason.

The center of our religion is the glory of it; and all the glory around the throne of God in heaven, is as nothing when compared to the glory of him, who is our exalted high priest.—Therefore as the high priest formerly was as the center to the Old Testament dispensation, so our high priest is the center and glory of the New: and what kind of Christians can they be, who are lukewarm about the glory of their religion?

3. Consider also, that the people for whom Christ is now interceding above, are infinitely dearer to himself than those for whom Solomon prayed could be to that prince; and it is well known, that we cannot be so intent on promoting the welfare of indifferent persons, as we are for procuring that of others who have the principal place in our affections. To have any suitable ideas of the truth of this, we must look at something more than words: Christ himself informs us, that the highest that a creature's love can rise to, is, to die for a friend. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend," John xv. 13. But Christ laid down his life for the worst of his enemies. We can form some idea of such a love as this; but it passeth all knowledge, to form suitable ideas of the love of Christ.

If Solomon had been possessed of ten thousand times more love to the people than he had, they would have been so much the more dear to him. Could a tender mother neglect interceding for the life of an only son, if she had influence, and a

good hope to obtain a pardon for him? It is possible that some peculiarly hardened one might neglect so to do;—but our glorious Intercessor above, is a contrast to such: his people are engraven on the palms of his hands; his love is written with something infinitely more intelligible than it could have been by letters.

We are not to imagine that any thing done or suffered by Christ, was only to make a display of love, by doing or suffering any thing which we cannot suppose possible to be done without love, and yet be destitute of that principle: nothing would be accounted more odious among men, than this. If we judge by matters of fact, what could evidence a being to have more love, than those unparalleled sufferings which Christ endured? and by these we are to form ideas of the greatness of his love. The scriptures particularly point us to this method of judging of the love of Christ; and is it possible to fix our thoughts on any thing, that will so much impress our hearts with the greatness of this love as the beholding him nailed to the cross, with the whole weight of our sins laid upon him? And all this by his own voluntary engagement? The love of Solomon was infinitely short of this; yet we make no doubt but that Solomon was possessed of an affectionate regard for the people: for if he had not been sincere in this prayer, it would have been one of the most splendid acts of hypocrisy that had ever been transacted under the heavens; and it would be a sin beyond description, so much as to imagine that Christ had not as much love as his actions declared him to have. It is evident the things he did and suffered, neither could or would have been done by him, had there not been in his heart that very love which such a conduct manifested; therefore, as we fully believe in what the Scriptures reveal concerning him, we ought frequently to pry into the greatness of this love; this would be doing the will of God like those in heaven. If any man, at this time of Solomon's praying, had paid no regard to him

him on account of his affection, he would have been reckoned void of respect either to the king or nation.

This fire of divine love in Christ, is invariable in its heat; indeed, it would not be for his honour now, in the sight of all the redeemed in heaven, to intercede for those with coolness and indifference, for whom he had discovered such boundless love on the cross. Immutability is one part of his mediatorial glory; and the least deviation would spoil the whole glory of his mediatorial character.

As this subject is so clearly proved to be true, by the most undeniable facts, is it not matter of lamentation, that we should have such a glorious Redeemer, even now embarked in our cause, and with such infinite love to us, and that we should so overlook this, as though we had neither regard for him or his people? Believers who study this subject, have something more to help their meditation, than they had who lived before the crucifixion. Those Jews who saw only Solomon thus engaged in prayer for the congregation, if they had not strong faith in the Messiah that was to come, saw little indeed, in comparison to what we do, who have this meridian sun shining upon us.

Though love, of itself, in any being, cannot raise the expectation, without some idea of power or influence joined with it; yet where power and influence is known to be equal with love, this, properly considered, will raise the hope of them for whom Christ ever liveth to make intercession; and it is an infinite mercy that his word declares, all power is lodged in his hands.

It is common for men, who are in expectation of something from government, frequently to call to mind that nobleman who has espoused their cause; and to think of him with a peculiar degree of pleasure and satisfaction, more especially if he be a man of such influence, that he can obtain for them whatever he pleases. If then we believed more in Christ, what pleasure should

should we enjoy! and what a help would an adequate idea of Christ be to us not only in life, but in death itself!

If the Christian was more studious in this point, and his thoughts more frequently engaged in the exaltation of Christ, as the subject-matter of his meditation, he would find more pleasure in this view of Christ, than he is aware of; and it is a great proof of the depravity of our natures, when we find ourselves so backward to seek delight in that which is undeniably the most interesting and agreeable part of our religion.

Christianity has not only realities in it, but they are such as fill angels and archangels with wonder—and, in particular, that after all the sufferings Christ has endured on the account of his people, they are as dear to him as ever: as he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. One of the highest pleasures the inhabitants of the heavenly world enjoy, consists in the idea they have of being dear to Christ, and in perceiving his love towards them is as immutable as his person. The more we are enabled to see this in a proper light, the nearer we approach to the joys of those who see eye to eye above.

There would never have been any mention made of Christ's sympathizing with his people, if this had not been the case; but "we have not an high-priest who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities," Heb. iv. 15. This will soon be seen by the whole assembled world, when Christ shall say concerning his disciples, that whatever has been done to the least of them, he considered as done to himself; which he could not then say, if it were not strictly true.

4. The honour conferred on Solomon, in the answer to his prayer, was very great: God, in the most public manner, testified his approbation. This undoubtedly encouraged the hearts of the people more than the words of the prayer itself; for what must the assembly expect, when they heard such an answer!—an universal joy would run through the whole of them that believed.

If we are helped to discern the high honour now granted to our king and priest, in the world above, will it not encourage our hearts, and be the subject-matter of our continual meditation and consolation? and we may be as fully assured, that the highest possible honours are conferred on him, as we are of his exaltation?

If the eyes and ears of the congregation were feasted, at this remarkable time, by beholding a king thus praying for them, should not ours be continually delighted on the same account? What was Solomon's praying for them, when compared with the intercession of our glorious high-priest, who always bears our names on his breast-plate before the throne of God? Solomon's prayer was but of short continuance; but our glorious high-priest will continue to plead our cause till the whole church shall be gathered home to himself.—This is as clearly revealed, as that he should take our nature, and be what he now is. "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent; Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedeck," Psalm cx. 4.

If the sacrifices of Solomon were accepted, and God gave a public testimony of his being pleased with them, how much more shall his be accepted, who offered himself without spot a sacrifice to God, of infinite value! We may be assisted in these reflections by referring to those scriptures which speak of his exaltation: "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name," Philip. ii. 9.

If Christ is thus exalted, it necessarily proves the acceptableness of his sacrifice, and of consequence the prevalency of his intercession. Therefore as it was the honour of Solomon to have such an immediate answer from God; our Jesus has an honour of this kind beyond what can be described by mortals. We hear of this by the hearing of the ear; but what would it be to see it, as it is beheld above!—This is one part of the blessedness of those who behold him without a cloud or veil between.

When on earth, what honour had he conferred on him! "Father, glorify thy name. Then, came there a voice from heaven,

ven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again," John xii. 28. This voice was for the comfort of his followers, and to impress their minds with this reviving truth, that the Father was as ready to confer all kinds of honour on his beloved Son, as he was to ask. This voice was not only for those who heard it with their ears, but for all that shall believe, to the end of the world.—This was such a beam of light from heaven, that it guides our very hearts into one of the most pleasing subjects, namely, the Father's delight to honour the Son.—Had he this honour given him when on earth, and can he be without it in the world above? If therefore the honour conferred on Solomon, was the joy of the congregation of Israel; this ought much more to be the delight of the whole body of the redeemed, both on earth and in heaven. If we consider that Christ is infinitely more dear to God, than Solomon; and also how deserving he is of all the honour which he is intitled to in his mediatorial character, we shall have our minds enlarged in this subject. Our believing is but talking about believing, if this is overlooked; accordingly the apostle thus addresses the church: "Who by him do believe in God who raised him up, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God," 1 Pet. i. 21. If therefore we are not looking to this, on what are our faith and hope founded?

God would never have put it into the heart of Solomon thus to pray, if he had not intended him the honour of a public approbation; and would he have stationed Christ where he is, if eternal honour would not have been the consequence? May we not then well conclude, that such a work would never have been given Christ to accomplish, had not that work been ordained to be done in such a manner, as to be eternally honoured in heaven before all the redeemed? When a son, who is beloved, performs an act that is highly pleasing, this renders the work still more acceptable; and this circumstance also proves the infinite acceptableness of Christ's sacrifice.—Reader, treat this subject in a manner suitable to the importance of it: according to that respect which Christ deserves

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from those who profess it, it will be their joy eternally to behold him honoured: God himself intimates thus much to us, in having revealed this agreeable subject in such a manner, as to invite us to make it our study and delight. He knows that a proper idea of this honour of Christ would greatly assist us in all our devotion, and also help us to walk in such a frame of spirit as becometh lovers of Jesus.

5. As the immense cost and treasure expended on the typical service, was a great proof (in those who contributed to it in faith) of their love of, and attention to, that worship; so the infinite riches Jehovah himself expends in this salvation, prove how much he values it. Men would never bestow a considerable degree of wealth and labour on that in which they found no pleasure, or had no expectation from. The mere value of the gold could not of itself afford the true worshipper any solid satisfaction; this was derived from those ideas they had of the infinite riches Jehovah himself would lay out in the great antitype of all that worship. The cost of the one led them to the consideration of the infinite value of the other; and whatever enlarged their ideas of the greatness of this salvation, was of real use to them; of this use were the great riches expended on the temple.

As David had been laying up an immense treasure for this magnificent structure, so God had infinite riches of grace, to be manifested in his own time; viewing this by faith, caused David to part with his gold so freely; for though he had many children, he was not like some, who, to cover the sin of covetousness, make their family a plea for not being willing to part with any thing for God, when, Judas like, covetousness is the main spring of their conduct.

As the shape or form of the utensils, made use of in the service of the temple, did not give them their chief glory, but the value of the massy gold, and their being appropriated to that service by the peculiar appointment of God himself; so that which gives infinite lustre and glory to the New Testament worship, is the per-

son and sufferings of him who is both God and man, the worth of whose person no archangel can compute.

The glory of Solomon's temple filled the surrounding nations with wonder; but the infinite treasure God himself has laid out in this salvation, will fill the saved nations with everlasting adoration. This is that which will make all the expence and labour mortals may be at, appear trifling and mean: therefore the types, though many of them were made of solid gold, obtained no better a name than shadows of that which was to come; for, in comparison, they were poor indeed; nor in that point of view, could the whole creation afford materials worthy of being called by a better name.

It is evident that men, who deny the divinity of Christ, and on that account must of consequence deny that his death was a proper sacrifice for sin; such persons, I say, love not to hear much about the Old Testament, nor of that worship in which so many sacrifices were appointed; since this makes it appear that there was something more necessary to the salvation of men, than repentance and reformation, which, without this great sacrifice, would be of no avail: but we may apply to them what an ignorant Papist once observed, who, meeting with the New Testament in a house, and not knowing what book it was, said, 'I can open at no place in this book, but it is all against my religion:'—So it may be truly said of the former, that both the Old as well as the New Testament, prove their system to be unscriptural. We cannot look either into the word of God, or take a view of the heavenly worship, but we must see their sentiments contradicted; this expression, "Unto him that has redeemed us unto God by his blood," cannot be made compatible with their antisciptural system.

To imagine that God would engage a people in a worship in which such immense sums should be expended, and sanction it in such a solemn manner, and yet only intend the external reformation of men, is ridiculous beyond all conception, and casts an awful and dishonourable reflection upon the divine author of that

worship; but when we are convinced of the nature of the antient worship; and that Jehovah designed to glorify himself eternally, in manifesting the riches of his grace, in such a way as should fill his people in this world with joy and hope, and those in heaven itself with eternal adoration and praise;—this unravels the whole, and demonstrates the ways of God to be gloriously consistent.

II. When God in this manner gives a sanction to ordinances of his own appointment, what ought they to expect to receive from him, when they attend upon him in these ordinances? We cannot surely approach those who love us superlatively, and have been accustomed to load us with favours, without having our expectations raised, and especially if they give us reason to expect favours in consequence of their promises. In general, God's people may expect that he will dwell with men on earth in very deed. This Solomon perceived, when he saw the temple filled with his glory. We are to consider such a manifestation as the primary end of instituted worship: "Thou hast ascended up on high, thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men, yea for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them," Ps. lxxviii. 18.

The countenancing this worship in so extraordinary a manner was a pledge and earnest of God's taking up his eternal abode with his people. This was no doubt the light in which the understanding people of God viewed it; for what less could they expect, when they saw such preparation, and all this by the appointment of God himself, but that he would honour his own ordinances with his presence? No doubt the saints in heaven, when they saw the King of kings enter upon his present station, perceived that great mercies were going to be granted to God's worshipping people below; they had read, while they were on earth, that Christ should "ascend on high, lead captivity captive, and receive gifts for men, that the Lord God might dwell with his people;" but though they formerly believed, yet there

is a great advantage in having a distinct view of these objects. If then the temple, and all the preparations of it, tended to raise the expectations of the people, how should we behold this costly preparation which God himself has made, and by which it evidently appears that he will glorify Christ, in bestowing blessings on his people to the end of the world! Heaven itself preaches this doctrine to man. But to descend to particulars:

1. The poor distressed soul, who is weary and heavy laden, may come to this Bethesda pool, and wait for the troubling of the water. Such are the most helpless, and therefore need peculiar encouragement. Where the God of all grace takes up his dwelling, these healing seasons may be expected. If this discourse should fall into the hands of such a one, let me exhort my reader to consider that it was the honour of Christ when on earth, and it is his glory now in heaven, to save sinners. Remember, that as Satan never tempted thee to despair of mercy before thou didst begin to be in earnest for thy salvation, this implies that he apprehends he shall lose thee, or he would never thus attempt to drive thee to despair;—but consider, when Christ ascended his throne in heaven, it was that he might “give repentance and remission of sins.”

If Christ has set up his standard near the army of rebels, and proclaims, that whoever comes shall not be refused; who among that army can have the least reason to dispute the encouragement? If the white flag of truce is held out, or carried forth, it is a breach of the law of nations to slay such as take refuge under it. Take Christ's character from his own words: “He that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.” Think it an infinite mercy to be under the sound of the Gospel; but a greater that you are now roused from that dreadful security in which most live and die, and all the dread and horror that may be occasioned by a sight of the provoking sin you have committed, will only drive you the more to the fullness of the atonement. Plead for and expect all that God has promised, “Seek, and ye shall find the Lord.”

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2. The hungry and thirsty soul may plead the promise in Isaiah xi. 3. "Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men utterly fail; but they that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength." God has left such promises on purpose to be pleaded. The believer may say as Jacob, "Do as thou hast said." He that rained manna on Israel, has his eye upon the whole camp of the redeemed; he knows that these, and these only, are the persons who value the provisions of his house, or have any eye to his promise; and such may expect not only his eye, but his heart to be towards them perpetually.

The Christian should look to God's word, and pray for faith to believe in him, as a faithful God, and plead those words, "I will abundantly bless her provision, I will satisfy her poor with bread," Ps. cxxxii. 15. What millions, by following such a method, have found by experience, that he who will make heaven a place for praise, will make those in his courts experience them to be Bethels for divine consolation! how frequently do we see those words fulfilled: Psalm lxxxiv. 4. "Blessed are they that dwell in thy house; they will be still praising thee!"

It is well when his worshippers look at a promising God through the glass of his word, and plead his promise. Indeed, he has even put words into the mouths of his needy ones, "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst; I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them," Isa. xli. 17. If any of our fellow creatures should give us such encouragement to apply to them in our necessity, we should think ourselves sufficiently authorized to plead for the supply of our wants.

Would not they who lived in the days of Solomon, promise themselves many a refreshing opportunity in that temple; especially when they heard God say, his eye and his heart should be there? And was not this answer in consequence of Solomon's prayer? What then may Christians expect who have One to intercede for them, whose influence with God is beyond all compare greater

greater than Solomon's? Remember, Jerusalem was, at the period when Solomon prayed, a lively place; but it is now dull and gloomy; but our Solomon can make the church of God alive all the world over. There is nothing now to be expected from the temple and its services; but the ground of our expectations is immutable as Jehovah.

3. It may be expected that the means of grace will be blessed, to the enlarging the understandings of the people of God in the knowledge of divine things. The word preached is for instruction; therefore the Holy Ghost accompanies the ministration of the Gospel, for the edification of the Church. Ordinances are as schools, where the heirs of heaven are educated. God can teach without public means; but if he chuses to appoint them for this end, what man is he that would presume to dictate to Jehovah?

They who have experienced the truth of this, have felt a sacred pleasure when the word has been opened to them; they have sat under his shadow with great delight. As light is pleasant to the eye, so is the knowledge of Christ to the believer. The natural sun was ordained to ripen the fruits of the earth; so the means of grace are ordained by God for the ripening of God's own plants, and to make the people of God grow in grace.

Many professors have no idea of this; they have a notion, that if they can but obtain pardon, and get safe into heaven at last, that is all they have in view: as for God being honoured and glorified, they have no thought; but how could they worship in faith, and please God, in this day of Solomon's prayer, who saw not the king as a type of Christ? It would be well if all worshippers were sensible of the necessity of knowledge, in order to worship aright. Under the word preached, the Holy Spirit takes of the things of Christ: he often puts a peculiar honour upon the means: many are taught such spiritual things there, which they had in vain sought for at home.

4. They may expect a word in season, who are exercised with particular difficulties. The Holy Ghost, who searches the deep things

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things of God, and is as much by office a comforter in the church below, as Christ is an intercessor within the veil, not only directs the minister, but applies the word to the very case. This is the reason why many suppose that some person has informed the minister of their circumstances and situation. So particularly is God attentive to all the cases of every individual of his children.

The house of God is often made a house of praise: there the heart, before rent with perplexity and care, has been relieved; and the believer has been enabled to see in such a manner the care of a covenant-keeping God, that sorrow has been turned into joy. In times of distress, the tried Christian runs to the house of God, and how often have those words in Isa. xl. 37. been fulfilled to such! Thus Hannah carried her grievous case to the Lord; and though she did not meet with relief by the public ministry, yet God gave her that comfort there, which she had not found at home.

God esteems himself honoured, when his people attend upon his appointments with a desire to worship him in spirit and in truth. He who came from the bosom of the Father, who is truth itself, declared this. Neglect of ordinances is looked on to be a positive proof of a profane spirit, both by God and men. Saul took no heed to walk in the ways of the Lord; David's highest pleasures were in God's worship; therefore God gave him the high honour of having the title of the man after his own heart: this is evidently proved from the very appointment of the means of grace, and especially from the peculiar delight with which God himself speaks of his church, Ps. lxxxvii. 2. "The Lord loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob."

III. I come next to shew how such ordinances ought to be attended, where God has promised to have his eye and heart perpetually. The nature of this subject will engage the attention of those who desire to please God.

1. With reverence and godly fear; without this, what evidence have we of real regard to God? His children, who feel a necessity for his favours, will feel such a sense of their own unworthiness,

things, that they will reverence him. There is a fear which is peculiar to a child of God ; he has said, " My fear I will put in their hearts." The unregenerate cannot thus honour God, " They that are in the flesh, cannot please God ;" their fear of him is only taught by the precepts of men. They may reason with themselves, that God is in every place ; but this will not give them that idea of his presence, which the Christian possesses. This fear is not that slavish fear, common to the guilty ; but it flows from real love and desire to please God ; such wish to keep from sin, that they may not offend. They who have this fear, ought to cultivate it. Every worshipper ought to consider the everlasting consequences which follow the Gospel Ministry : to some, it is a favour of life ; to others, a favour of death ; this caused Paul to feel himself weak, so that he cries out, " Who is sufficient for these things ?"

A light airy conduct is a badge of ignorance ; such understand no more what is the proper business in a place of worship, than Herod, with his men of war, knew of Christ. Where God is not revered, he knows he is not regarded.

2. Fervent prayer becomes those who are going to meet with such a God in public worship ; they should seek his face repeatedly in private : a neglect here will soon be experienced. If you consider the many and the great favours you want for yourselves, and others, you will never want an errand to a throne of grace ; and if you want a heart to pray, you have got an errand in your own breast. To neglect prayer, is to carry strange fire to the house of God. A congregation should meet on a sabbath morning ; as once the English captains met on the field before battle begun : they had been at prayer together the night before ; and when they met next morning in the field of battle, they said one to another, Now for an answer to our prayers. If we have many in our congregations who have been so happily employed, we may expect such prayers will be like Saul's sword, and Jonathan's bow, which will not return empty. A praying congregation is a great encouragement to a minister. When prayer is neglected in a congregation, they
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seem, when they meet, more likely to bring a curse upon themselves, than a blessing. Bring not only your presence into the place of worship, but your prayers. To go to worship without prayer, is like a man telling his Maker he wants nothing of him, he desires not the knowledge of his ways. If therefore a man does not go to the house of God to receive an answer to his prayers, he goes to increase his offences; and once more presumes on the patience of a God, who has long borne with his hypocrisy. Prayer for the success of the Gospel is highly agreeable to God, "Save now, I beseech thee, O Lord—send now prosperity," Ps. cxviii. 25.

3. Attendance on the worship of God should be constant, and in proper time: God is a God of order, not of confusion. An unsteady hearer, Reuben like, will never excel; such seldom are either comfortable at home, or useful abroad. Like the Athenians, they are ever on the wing, after something new; the thoughts of such run more upon the preacher, than on him who engages the minds of real worshippers; these seek themselves, not the honour of God; if they are more than once in a moon in a place, it is matter of wonder. These give Christ no more pleasure, than they do the minister comfort; and many of these when they have been carried, like clouds, with every wind, at last mix with the world, and become members of that body.

In proper time Peter's hearers were all present to hear the heavenly message. Shall tradesmen rise soon, and exert themselves, that they may not lose any part of the market; and shall hearers for eternity act in such a manner, as to give proof they care not whether they trade for heaven or no? They who grudge one quarter of an hour on a sabbath morning, we may rationally expect, have been sparing enough of their time in private prayer in the week. If you would enjoy the light of God's countenance, do not disturb his children in his worship; and if you love such company, why not come sooner into it?

4. Enter his courts with gratitude and praise: never come for new favours, without your thank-offering for former mercies. Let it be engraven upon your very hearts, "I will never forget his loving kindness;" or, as the lively Psalmist says, in another psalm, v. 7. "I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercies."

We should aim at doing his will on earth, as those are doing it in the heavenly world: heaven is filled with gratitude. In the Old Testament worship, they were commanded to come with thankfulness, and eat before God. You will not want matter for thankfulness, if you can see what an infinite mercy it is you are not in hell; but especially, if you have reason to believe you shall be joined for ever with the heavenly worshippers. Think how few at this day have the gospel; how many blind are led by the blind. Are you favoured with the gospel? look on it as one of the greatest outward mercies God bestows on a creature. When the word preached is regarded only as common, and we have no eye to see ourselves distinguished, we shall not be thankful.

An affectionate worshipper at this time, when he saw the king praying, and heard God's answer, and all things carrying on with such animation, would think that man had no soul who was not thankful that he ever lived to see such a day; and shall we behold the influence our King and Priest has in the heavens, and such things as are carrying on for us there, and yet be stupid in the midst of all? If an ancient worshipper was thankful for these opportunities, we ought to be filled with praise above measure.

APPLICATION.—If the people in Solomon's time were struck with the splendor and glory of that worship, should not the dispensation we now enjoy engage our attention? and should not we in a particular manner eye the immense cost which God himself has been at on our account? If we do not admire it, we do not love it. If any friend does such an act for us as was never before performed by one friend for another, will it not be extremely provoking if such an act be overlooked? The redeemed in heaven are in this respect

respect peculiarly agreeable to God ; they are filled with the highest gratitude, and the chief things which God has done on their account, are perpetually in their thoughts. If the whole riches of God are laid out for such unworthy creatures, and we rarely so much as look at this infinite kindness, it is treating the greatest of things with awful and unpardonable neglect.

We have not that costly and burdensome service which the Old Testament worshippers had—the infinite price is now paid ; there is therefore no longer a necessity to hold forth the great sacrifice in costly types and shadows, which could not now assist our minds in beholding the value of it : all this should make us admire and prize our privileges.

Learn to look as constantly through all ordinances to the center of our worship, as they of old looked through the types to the great Antitype. How was the mind of Abel employed, when, sacrificing, he obtained such a testimony of God's approbation ? If he pleased God, what was there in him so highly agreeable ? How were the minds of all the ancient worshippers employed ? They saw by faith, that which is come to pass. And do not the things themselves, which they only saw by faith, appear before our eyes ? Are they not clearly held out to us by God himself, and should not these engage our attention ? Do we not behold them to be as real as the existence of Jehovah, and great beyond all description ? To overlook their value, is to treat the whole Gospel with indifference. If God testified his approbation of the conduct of any man, or set of men, we ought particularly to notice that, for by this we learn what those things are which are most agreeable to God. Thus that which was evidently agreeable to God in Abel, Abraham, and some of the most eminent saints under the law, was, that respect they had to what is even now so dear to God in heaven, namely, the incarnation and crucifixion of Him who is God's beloved Son.

The few thoughts many professors have about the chief things in the Gospel, proves the little love they have to Christ, or concern

about his glory. Whatever any may think of this, it is peculiarly disagreeable to God; for how valuable soever the offerings of any man were, if he had not his eye to the substance, God informed such, that it was not the fat of rams or of lambs, which gave him pleasure; but the worshippers, who by faith, like Abraham, looked forward to Christ's day. Legal worshippers formerly, as well as now, imagined they did great things when they offered something very valuable, and especially in their voluntary or free-will offerings; but when the cost or value of their own offerings turned away their eyes from the Antitype, all was more than lost.

2. Behold this intercession of our great King in the world of glory, to be as real as that Solomon ever offered up in prayer; and that even now the eye and heart of God are as much intent on his people and ordinances, as at the very period when Solomon was pouring out his prayer. Pray that the Holy Spirit may give you clear views of this; and of the glory and influence of him, who, before the incarnation, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; and whose glory now, as Mediator, consists peculiarly in this, *i. e.* that he can save so gloriously. Christ's glorying in our salvation, is our joy.

We can look on redemption with pleasure and satisfaction, when we behold it to be that very thing in which Christ's glory is so much interested. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen:" their worship of old was both by faith and sight, for they saw their high priest, and understood his appointment to be of God. Though our high priest is made with an oath, and in a more peculiar manner sanctioned by the authority of God; yet our ideas of this important part of the system of redemption, are all by faith; we should therefore consider Christ as really interceding for us, as if we saw him with our bodily eyes.

3. Beware of an indifferent and lukewarm spirit in worship: let God be witness, that it is his face you seek, and that nothing

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short of his presence can content you. Remember, lukewarmness is hated in heaven. Watch and pray, that you may be preserved from a frame so dangerous to yourselves, and so dishonourable to Christ. Was Christ lukewarm, when he had his cross upon his back, and was going on towards Calvary? Can we content ourselves with the form of religion, who have such things before our eyes as continually animate both saints and angels in heaven? When persons first set out in religion, they seldom complain of lukewarmness; their minds run almost perpetually on religious subjects; they attend on the word preached with an ardent desire of communion with God; and are seldom found in a complaining tone, except they have brought it on themselves by neglect in private. This no doubt was one cause why Christ exhorted all his disciples to watch.

4. Take notice, whether you are looking through the effects, to the great First Cause. Those things which ought to engage our attention, must have love for the grand cause of their ever coming into the mind of God himself. Great things done for others, must proceed from great love, or by some great mistake, or out of great hypocrisy: the two latter can never be ascribed to God.—Christ dying on Calvary, was the grandest effect that ever cause produced; Christ living and interceding in heaven, must have the same cause. As the effect is now evident to us on earth, and also to those in heaven; so let us, like those in the world above, look at the cause by the assistance of the glorious effect; this is the way to behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. If we pursue not this method, we do not follow that light which the Scripture gives us concerning this subject. The method that God points out to us in his word, is, to behold things which are more hidden and mysterious, by those which are brought more within the compass of our senses. If we turn our thoughts on infinite love, it is a sublime subject, and we are at a loss how to form any idea of it satisfactorily to ourselves; but if we attempt to pry into this love
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by the effect, *i. e.* Christ on the cross, and now interceding, we find great assistance in the study of this subject.

These are the very things the angels desired to look into; and it is by the beholding of these, that we shall find our affections rise to things above. Did they who only had the assistance of types, look towards these things with such longing desires; and shall we rarely turn our thoughts on them, when God holds them before our very senses?

5. Look at the evident blindness and ignorance of many around you, and be thankful that your eyes are blessed with seeing: Never forget who made you to differ. Shall your eyes be delighted to all eternity, and have you eyes to see the most entertaining and animating subjects now?—and will not many among those you know see nothing, to all appearance, but sorrow in this world, at death see their judge an enemy, behold hell their everlasting home, and the lost for their eternal companions? and shall you have pleasure here and for ever!

I cannot see how we can expect to possess a grateful and happy frame of soul, while we neglect the means appointed for such an end. Every man, who has some important end in view, naturally thinks by what means he can obtain such an end. Is not the unthankfulness, and the lowness of the spirits of many, owing to their inattention to this method? They complain of their ungrateful hearts; but do they ever sit down in earnest to take up this subject? They have persons near them every day, in whom they might read, as in so many books, till they would be constrained to cry out, Lord, why me? No doubt this was the case with Jacob, when he met Esau. Use then the means, and fear not obtaining the end.

6. Frequently examine yourselves. Is choice the principle that moves you to worship, or is it force? If choice, then divine worship is your element, and you are never more happy than when your heart is enlarged in it; this will make your sabbaths at times delightful. Think of the infinite love of him who has

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put a new spirit within you : by this, your duty is made a real pleasure ; while others are in chains, you are at liberty in his service. This should make you enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise.

Attention to the frame of your mind will more and more afford you information in this subject. Who can tell the spirit of a man like the man himself ? To find that we are possessed of a spirit quite different from what we ourselves once had, and from what many now possess, who have the advantage of the same means of grace we are favoured with ; is a convincing token that God has formed us for his service.

The very idea of this, when a Christian is going to worship, is a means of making him believe he shall obtain other mercies ; and it is but reasonable that persons, who share in such distinguishing mercies, should, when they are approaching God in his ordinances, never lose sight of the greatest of his favours.

Do you desire to please God as a promising God, and to come before him as those who believe ? Do you come to wait for the fulfilment of his word ; and do you keep your eye upon him, as both the living and speaking God ? He that cometh to God, must believe. Talk not about believing the promise, without an eye to the Promiser ; and never attend his worship, without his word.

We have poor, impoverished ideas of God, when we have them not from his word. If we desire to please God, we ought to be particularly concerned for such a knowledge of him, as will assist us in believing in him : " They that know his name, will put their trust in him." That frame of mind which is agreeable to God, will in general be comfortable to us ; but had it been the case, that our comfort would not have been enlarged by this knowledge, we ought to give diligence to obtain it purely out of regard to the will and pleasure of God.

The more we aim at God's pleasure in our worship, the more we may expect the light of his countenance. What has God at any time testified his hatred against more, than when professors have

have not attended to his honour and pleasure in worship? If God has repeatedly met you in worship, and fulfilled his word to you, the greater will be the provocation in overlooking his word.

Do you feel a concern for the glory of God? Do you delight to see his worshippers affectionate? Can you pray with concern for the prosperity of Zion? Or are you like many, who evidently are void of any such concern; who, though they profess love, care nothing for him? they pretend to regard, but where is the proof of it? See that your love be attended with its proper concomitants. If you are not willing to examine into this, it is a proof that you are not concerned whether you profess true love, or no.

What king would be pleased with a soldier, if he perceived the man had no kind of concern whether the army gained or lost the battle? No more will Christ testify his approbation of such as are wholly indifferent, whether his cause flourish, or no. Reason itself confirms this truth. Those hearers, who come to a place of worship without any concern for the glory of God, often injure the spirit of a lively minister, and do unspeakable hurt in the congregations where they attend; for as iron sharpeneth iron, *i. e.* as lively and affectionate Christians do each other good; these, on the contrary, blunt and deaden the spirits of worshippers. How happy would many a minister feel, when he was going to preach the word, if he had a thorough persuasion his hearers had been wrestling with God for a blessing!

Do you find a delight in being taught the knowledge of God? Beware of a religion that leads not the mind to God; it is only a renewed soul that can be delighted in beholding this glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. We may say of many professors, "The voice is Jacob's, but the hands are Esau's." Like crows, they fly high in profession, yet they come down to the earth for their food; for they live and delight only in the world.

These hear without any intention or desire of seeing more and more into the mystery of redeeming love. When they read the word at home, it is from a common persuasion that they ought to

read, not from a desire of being rooted and grounded in love, or of drinking more deeply into the wells of salvation. Every Christian will feel something of this, when his heart is out of frame; but when this is the habitual frame of any, it proves that man to be deceiving his own soul. Such a man finds no necessity for the assistance of the Holy Spirit; he does not delight in the subject of redemption, or he would feel a desire to see more and more, like Paul, into the heights and depths of that love which is revealed in the word of God. They who have learnt savingly, are always desirous to know more; they who understand nothing properly, are indifferent about more knowledge.

Do you consider the eternal consequences which await all professors? *i. e.* that all will in a little time be with the worshippers in the heavenly world; or mixed with the tormented in the regions of damnation? That the distance of time between the present and this great change, is but as a dream, and you will awake in heaven or hell? Then will you meet with a much larger congregation than Solomon prayed before, to whichever world you go.

Why have we such things represented to us in Scripture, by the most striking metaphors, and in the most striking language by Christ himself, but to engage our attention? How can those professors bless God for preventing them from stumbling on the dark mountains of eternity, who have not the least idea of the dangerous state of a way-side hearer, or a foolish virgin? Professors, who have never been roused by the thunder of Christ's voice, so as to have some apprehensions of the happiness of the faithful servant whom his Lord shall bless, and the dreadful case of the evil servant who shall be cast into hell, where there shall be weeping and wailing, and gnashing of teeth, afford too much proof that they have never heard the voice of the Son of God at all.

There is not the least necessity to persuade us concerning the absolute certainty of consequences, nor of their being eternal; but a lively impression of these is found only in a few. Sometimes we find a professor shaken over the grave by some terrible disorder;

der; alarmed beyond all description, he finds his master calls, and he, like the foolish virgin has been fast asleep; he has been like the unwise sailor, that knew he might expect the storm, which coming soon after, he fears the vessel will be dashed all to pieces, before any preparation can be made. There are few but have been roused at one time or another from their lethargy; but the dull and insensible slumber returns, and they have relapsed into the very frame they determined they would never be in one day more. Nothing but having spiritual life maintained by spiritual subjects, and the soul's being delighted with them, will ever keep the Christian's head above the allurements of this world—The man who retains the most lively apprehensions of those infinite and eternal consequences which are before him, will always be the most animated hearer; will walk with the greatest sense of the value of the Gospel; will pray the most fervently for a blessing on the word to his own soul; and will feel the most hearty concern for the souls of others.

Many a hearer is finding fault with his minister, and discerns not the large beam which is in his own eye. When the heart is impressed with these important consequences, a hearer will be in a more proper frame both to hear and judge of a discourse; I wish also all hearers to consider, that when a minister beholds, in the conduct and complexion of his hearers, a careless and indifferent frame of spirit, it affects him in such a manner as would almost damp the zeal of an archangel.

Do you find, that by hearing the word you are possessed of a faith that overcomes the world? The faith of some makes them more greedy of perishing things; and a feigned faith has been a fatal faith to many; read in the eleventh of the Hebrews, and you will see their faith was more than a name, "They were looking for a city that had foundations, whose builder and maker is God."

This was not a mere talking about faith. This believing was not owing to apprehensions of this world not being able to give happiness

happiness to an immortal soul, but from a realizing view of the glories of salvation being infinitely superior to any thing this world can afford. Many, when affliction and distress pour in like a land-flood, are for leaving the world, as a man would flee from an island that is sinking, or a house about to fall; the agreeableness of the place to which he is removing not being the motive for his flight: this is a poor evidence of that faith which overcomes the world.

That faith which has for its evidence the love of things within the veil, comes up to the touchstone of the word of God—"Where your treasure is, there will your hearts be also."

A true worshipper, who saw Solomon engaged in prayer, heard the answer of God, and shared in the happiness of that day, would look forward toward the period when the whole body of the redeemed should meet to part no more; when the glorious Immanuel, who has infinitely more love to his people than ten thousand Solomons could experience, would be seen eye to eye, and would then be enjoyed without a cloud between.

The beholding religious pleasures to be unspeakably great, and not capable of being interrupted by the cares of this world, will make a man retire to his home, wishing for the arrival of that blessed period, when he shall see even as he is seen. The faith that enables a man to overcome the world, leads him to realities beyond this world; while the man with a feigned faith is in no respect the more heavenly for it.

You whose consciences bear this testimony, that you are neither Cains nor Esaus; you are not, like Doeg, detained, and so worship only by constraint; nor like Saul, who only desired honour before the people. Think how assuredly they shall dwell with God in heaven, whose delight has been to enjoy him in his courts below. You are following millions, who were formed for heaven in this lower world.

Learn to regard heaven as your home ; be familiar with the chief subjects which engage the minds of its inhabitants ; that when you behold your mortal bodies to be just at the mouth of the grave, your souls may be elevated with ideas where the immortal part is going. It is of little consequence where the body shall lie ; your immortal and glorified spirit shall be in the most delightful company above, when your body is a feast for worms in the grave. Learn how to apply the remedy, before you feel the sore. Job had learnt this lesson in his prosperity. Shall we be heirs of heaven, and be estranged from it in our own thoughts ? Is this the way to show Christ, that we love him ?

If the eye and heart of God is in a peculiar manner where his worshippers meet, it ought to make us particularly attend to the frame of our hearts. This becomes such as believe that the approbation of God is the most desirable thing under the heavens. We labour not under the disadvantage of many loyal subjects, who would think themselves happy, were their very thoughts and hearts known to their king ; while traitors and rebels are glad of a cover.

The sincere soul is more concerned for the rights of the King of kings, than the rights of man, and is persuaded the only method to obtain any mercy is to give him his due ; he feels a real pleasure in the omniscience of the King of heaven, who he is sensible sees his concern for his glory ; when his conscience bears him this testimony, " Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee." Of this we have evident proof, when we feel that faith which works by love, when our hearts are watching and praying for all that he is now interceding for, and all he died for.

As the souls of the saved will be so much more happy than their bodies till the resurrection, so the bodies of the damned shall know no pain till that important period ; but what will the lost soul have experienced before that awful trumpet shall sound, when soul and body shall be united once more to be finally judged, awfully condemned,

condemned, and by the Judge himself bid to depart into everlasting fire! How momentary will all the seasons of joy or sorrow appear then, that any of the wicked have known in this transitory world; how little to that eternal scene, when it will be fully known who shall enter into their Master's joy, and who shall go where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth!

Perhaps many who were among the vast crowds when Solomon prayed, and at that time paid no regard either to the prayer, or Jehovah to whom the prayer was putting up, will be on the left hand. Can these be stupid and careless before the tremendous Judge? You, who now have not the least desire of being interested in the intercession of our great King and Priest in glory, how will you feel when you see the Saviour you slighted all the days of your life? How will you behold with extreme horror, and gaze upon his glory! How will you carry with you to the regions of damnation those ideas you then had of his glory! There is fiery indignation awaiting all insipid and careless worshippers. *Ye foolish virgins, will nothing rouse you before the doors are for ever shut?*

What will it be to behold our King and Priest, with the whole concerns of his church on his heart! Shall we see him esteem it a glory in being in such an office! we shall then see the whole design of the typical worship, and the full glory of the dispensation we are now under. Christ himself will make us more than welcome to a place among that glorious company. In the faith of this, let us live happy while we live, and rejoice at death in the thoughts of such an eternal home; a home, where all are engaged and delighted with the same subjects. Here our worship is clogged with insipid and heartless worshippers; worldly cares and anxieties toss and perplex the most heavenly hearts. Oh for that rest, that enjoyment, which is as certain, as assuredly before us, as that ever the temple was built, or that Solomon prayed!

If it refreshed the heart of a good man, who saw a great king happy in such a station as that in which Solomon then stood, what shall we see in him, of whom Solomon was scarce a shadow, ye
less

less than the smallest atom to the sun ! what glories shall engage these eyes and ears of ours eternally !

Ye who have had many a happy moment in the house of God, may yet have many a gloomy hour when you come near the borders of eternity. Have you never been witness to the old traveller, who, when near his home, his bones filled with pain, his room like a lonely prison, knows he shall never leave that place, till his corpse be carried out ? for such to behold by a lively faith himself just stepping into the glorious temple of God above, which, as it has been his delight to behold by faith, his King and Priest in heaven, he is now sent to inhabit, by no less a Being than the Lord of heaven, who waits his arrival with a crown in his hand ready to place it on the head of the conqueror,

They were such ideas as these, which made Paul long to be absent from the body, that he might be present with the Lord, " There is laid up for me a crown," &c. Such who, like Paul, live in the faith of such a King and Intercessor, must believe as the most ardent love was in his heart, when he hung suspended on the cross on Calvary, and having interceded with the same unparalleled affection, with what frame of heart will he receive into heaven those for whom he died, and for whom he has so perpetually interceded !

Let us then aim more and more, to treat these subjects, not as fictions, but as things than which nothing can be of greater importance, nor any thing be more real and true ; let us aim at living with no less impression of these interesting truths, than if we saw them with our bodily eyes ; then we shall experience our faith working by love, and at times be enabled to say, " whom having not seen we love, and though now we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable," &c.

We are not in want of materials to encourage our faith ; the greatest defect is in our understandings ; Paul therefore prayed particularly for eyes enlightened, " The eyes of your understandings being enlightened," &c. Eph. xviii. Were our eyes more enlightened,

lightened, how would the very things which engage the attention of spirits and angels above fill our thoughts? We should attend upon ordinances with an impression of God being there, and coming to meet us in love; we should more than hope for kind answers from heaven, when both such love and influence, united in one glorious King and Priest, are continually before the throne on our account. Our closet exercises would be more evangelical, and our family devotion afford more life and comfort; our feet would stand more firm on that foundation which God has laid in Zion; we should animate our fellow travellers while we live, and in our dying moments give glory to God, as those who are just within sight of the King of kings; not praying like Solomon in a mixed croud, but in a far greater number, where all see and understand the nature of the worship; where all are filled with adoration while they behold with astonishment the infinite things done for them by Jehovah.

There the everlasting and electing love of the Father is fully understood; there redemption by the incarnation of the Father's Fellow, who, though from everlasting in the form of God, yet thought it not robbery to be equal with God, is seen without a veil between. To behold such an High Priest in his complete person, making salvation his peculiar pleasure and glory, which is seen in more than words, in his having been nailed to the cross; we shall then behold with wonder the love of the Holy Ghost, and feel for ever why he is called the Comforter; we shall then understand what continual need we stood in of his continual support and presence. As we now find by experience, we who were in darkness have been led into the mystery of Redeeming Love, so we shall then fully understand how to worship the undivided Three in one Jehovah for evermore.



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the Minds of the Public, respecting MY FAMILY BIBLE (viz. That
it



Mr. PRIESTLEY's ADDRESS to the PUBLIC.

it will not be *carried on* and *finished* in the *same complete* and *uniform Manner* in which it is *begun*), I think it proper to *inform* the WORLD at LARGE, that I did not engage in the WORK till I had *ample Encouragement* from some of the FIRST CHARACTERS in LONDON, that it would be *executed* in the *most complete Manner*; and when I saw such *Characters* interested in the Work, Men high in the Esteem of all serious Persons, and a Plan laid in so *complete a Manner*, to bring out into the World an *Evangelical Exposition* of the *Scriptures* in the *moderate Compass* of only 90 Numbers, and at the *small Expence* of only 6d. per Week, besides presenting the Purchasers GRATIS with a Set of Large Folio COPPER-PLATES,---*a Thing unknown in England before*.---I viewed the Circumstance as a CALL from GOD; and though I have for MANY YEARS been LABOURING from the PULPIT in different Parts of these Kingdoms to Spread a Knowledge of SALVATION by CHRIST alone, yet I thought GREAT GOOD might be done by PREACHING from the PRESS, so as to *Expound* the *Difficult Parts* of the *Holy Bible*; and accordingly I determined, under the Assistance of Divine Grace, to embrace the Opportunity afforded me of becoming *extensively useful that Way*---especially as there have been so many Bibles published with Notes written by Men of *erroneous Principles*---and which I wish to caution all Readers to avoid as they would a *Pestilence*. It is well known, that many other Bibles with scarce any Notes, exceed this in Price; therefore, when I saw a Plan proposed of comprising as much as possible (about TWICE the USUAL QUANTITY) in every Page, by the *peculiar Construction*, Elegance, and Clearness of the Types, I was fully convinced it would be putting a Bible and Commentary into the Hands of Thousands of Labouring Men, not one in twenty of whom have hitherto seen any sound Exposition of the Bible, on Account of the high Expence to Purchasers. This Circumstance, I confess was, and is to me, a peculiar Satisfaction, that I ever engaged in THIS WORK; and to the Objection some of my Friends have mentioned, of my not being able to confine myself to the Compass of Ninety Numbers only, I answer, I have been particularly acquainted with Expositions and Commentaries for more than THIRTY YEARS, and am fully persuaded, that the TEDIOUS and Unnecessary ENLARGEMENTS which have been made on many Places by some, do no Advantage in general, but only weary the Readers; for, instead of being induced at the Sight of such Expositions to look into them, many are rather inclined to take up any other Book. This is owing principally to TWO THINGS, which should be carefully avoided by all Authors.

1st. The being disgustfully TEDIOUS where Readers can gain more Information from the TEXT itself than from Notes improperly introduced.

2^{ndly}, The NEGLECT in most Expositors of introducing HISTORY and GEOGRAPHY, to explain the Customs of the People, and the Places mentioned in the Scriptures.

I intend to take Warning by the MISTAKES of OTHERS, and to pass by some Parts with suitable REFLECTIONS, where a needless PROLIXITY in the Notes would be of no Advantage. I am persuaded many who know me will not be surprised at my engaging in such an arduous WORK, when they consider how many Thousands of poor Creatures are deluded by many false Teachers, who knowing little themselves, tell them such Things are NOT in the Original. GOD has most mercifully interposed in this Respect during the present Century, in stirring up some of the FIRST MEN in Europe to extend a Knowledge of the HEBREW particularly,

MR. PRIESTLEY's ADDRESS Continued.

and to make that Language more perfectly understood than heretofore. THIS WORK will be enriched by the useful Labours of those Men, on which Account I am very sensible I shall meet with great Opposition; not only from open Enemies, but from some Ministers, who being ARIANS or SOCI- NIANS in their Hearts, are glad to conceal their Sentiments from their Con- gregations and the Public. Many of those accommodating Preachers are more afraid of their Sentiments being known, and their Hearers understanding those Scriptures--in which the DOCTRINES of the TRINITY, the DIVI- NITY of CHRIST, and his being set forth as the PROPER OBJECT of WORSHIP, the FALL of MAN, the IMPUTATION of CHRIST's RIGHTEOUSNESS, and the IMPOSSIBILITY of SALVATION by the COVENANT of WORKS, are fully asserted--than ever the PA- PISTS formerly were of their poor deluded Hearers' reading the WORD of GOD. An Opportunity of delivering such Men and their Hearers from ER- ROR and DELUSION will, no doubt, be pleasing to all Lovers of Christ; and therefore I cannot but return Thanks both to GOD and my FRIENDS for the great Encouragement I have already met with in My FAMILY BIBLE. The TYPES for the TEXT of this Work, are cast from the ele- gant Model of Dr. WILSON of GLASGOW--and the TYPES for the other Departments, viz. the EXPOSITORY NOTES, MARGINAL REFERENCES, and EVANGELICAL REFLECTIONS, are cast by Messrs. CASLON and FRY. The PAPER is prepared at the Mills of Messrs. VALLANCE and CONDER. The COPPER-PLATES will be Engraved from DESIGNS of the most EMINENT ARTISTS Ancient and Modern; and the Writing to explain the Subjects of each Print, will be Engraved by those well known Masters, GRAY, CONDER, THOROW- GOOD, &c. I therefore wish that all those who would possess themselves, or recommend to others, a COMPLETE WORK of this KIND, will com- pare the PAPER, PRINT, and EXECUTION in general of THIS PUBLICATION with any other similar Performance, and give the Preference according to MERIT and CHEAPNESS.

As I deem it highly dishonourable for any Author or Publisher to de- viate from his public Engagements, I beg it may be particularly observed, that I am determined to keep my WORD with the Public respecting the 90 Numbers proposed agreeable to my Promissory Note of Hand delivered with the First Number.

JEWIN-STREET,
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TIMOTHY PRIESTLEY.

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